

**Cultural and Historical Committee
Meeting Minutes
November 17, 2009**

The Bethany Beach Cultural and Historical Committee held a meeting on Tuesday, November 17, 2009 at 1:00 p.m. in the Town Meeting Room, 214 Garfield Parkway, Bethany Beach, DE 19930.

Members present: Carol Olmstead, who presided; Margaret Young, Gloria Farrar, Mary Lou Urquhart, Theo Loppatto, and Mary Lou McNerney.

Excused members: Pat Rogers and Jane Fowler.

Also present: Pam Szypulski, guest; Lindsey Shallcross, Administrative Secretary.

Call To Order

Ms. Olmstead called the meeting to order at 1:10 p.m.

Approval of the Minutes from October 6, 2009

After a few corrections, Ms. Loppatto made a motion to approve the minutes as amended. Ms. Urquhart seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved.

Historical Plaques for Renovated Homes

Discussion and Vote

Ms. Olmstead suggested asking the Public Works Director of Bethany Beach, Brett Warner, to install the four new boardwalk plaques so that they are removable.

Ms. Farrar recommended checking with the Town Manager to determine if the new plaques to be installed on the boardwalk will be covered by the Town's insurance policies. Ms. Olmstead said that she will verify with Mr. Gravier.

Ms. Olmstead stated that she called the Town of Lewes to receive information on their guidelines for historical buildings that have been renovated, but she hasn't heard back from them yet.

Ms. Young said that she conducted some research on the house located on Hollywood Street that is owned by the Letz family. She contacted the builder of the house, Mr. Goode, who also renovated the house in 2007 and found that only 25% of the original house is still remaining.

Ms. Olmstead expressed her appreciation to Ms. Young for all of her effort in the research. She then added that the Committee needs to research further.

Ms. Olmstead advised the Committee that they need to focus on:

- Do we want to consider renovated homes for receiving historical plaques?
- The Committee needs to conduct research locally and on the Internet.
- Guidelines for the plaques for historical houses that have been renovated need to be established.

After this is completed, she advised that they need to discuss and vote on the issue as a Committee.

Ms. Young informed the Committee members that she suggested to the Town Council at the November Council Workshop to consider having a future workshop in regards to the owners of older homes receiving incentives for repairs from the Town, in order to encourage preserving them rather than tear down.

The Committee members agreed that this would be beneficial since many homes need a considerable amount of work to maintain them, which is expensive.

Ms. Olmstead mentioned that there isn't a Historic District in Bethany Beach. She also acknowledged that the Committee should support Ms. Young as she works on this plan and bring it forth to the Town Council.

Ms. Olmstead stated that the Committee will continue to discuss these issues and vote at the next meeting.

Cultural Events

October Event Input

- Ms. Young expressed that the Pumpkin Chunkin' film was well done.
- Ms. Urquhart said that her son and grandchildren attended the actual event and they enjoyed it.
- People from all over various locations were present.
- However, there was not an overwhelming attendance.
- Ms. Olmstead suggested that if the event started at an earlier time then it would perhaps have had more people present.

Suggestions for Future

Ms. Olmstead proposed that the Committee should take a break from conducting Cultural Events and take this year to focus on other issues, but to continue brainstorming and researching ideas for future events.

Oral History Update

Input from Ray Disney

Ms. Olmstead said she spoke with Ray Disney, and he suggested that he should set aside Wednesdays and Thursdays from 12:00-3:00 p.m. to carry out the interviews.

Mr. Disney also advised Ms. Olmstead that the Committee members should contact him to schedule a time for the interviews. The Committee members agreed with his suggestion.

Ms. Olmstead noted that Mr. Disney expressed that he feels a better product would be produced in his studio. Ms. Farrar added to the Committee members that there is a virtual tour of his studio on the Internet.

Each interview will last approximately thirty (30) minutes and there are forty (40) individuals to be interviewed.

The interviewees will be given a list of suggested topics prior to the interview so they can think of ideas to discuss.

Ms. Young asked if the interviewees are being asked the questions by the Committee members and Ms. Olmstead responded that Mr. Disney will be asking the questions.

Ms. Olmstead pointed out that Mr. Disney is a professional who can obtain valuable information with minimal questions. Ms. Loppatto added that the product will turn out better since one person will be conducting the interviews.

Ms. Young proclaimed that since Mr. Disney doesn't know the interviewees, he may miss getting important points.

Ms. Olmstead explained that Mr. Disney will be able to maintain the flow of the interview. She stated that the Committee already created a list of questions for Mr. Disney to use.

Ms. Urquhart asked if there was a way to make an appointment with the first six people being interviewed. Ms. Olmstead advised to start out with no more than two interviews in case they last longer.

Mr. Disney is going to edit the interviews for a final product, but he will also have discs of each entire interview.

Ms. Loppatto made a suggestion to add an item titled "Feedback on Oral Histories" on future agendas. The Committee members agreed that this would be a good idea.

Ms. Loppatto proposed that the Committee send out letters to the interviewees explaining the project before calling them. Ms. Olmstead responded that even though this is a thoughtful idea, a phone call is more personal.

Ms. Olmstead read the document to the Committee members. She said the interviewee and a witness (Ray Disney) will sign it. The contracts will be kept on file.

Ms. Olmstead expressed that Mr. Disney is very excited to move forward with this project.

Loop Canal Centennial Recognition

Discussion

Ms. Olmstead announced that the Loop Canal was built in 1910 and that its 100th anniversary is on July 10, 2009.

She added that the Loop Canal is registered as a historical location with the Delaware State Archives. There is a historical plaque there that was provided by the Archives Office at the conclusion of the Town's Centennial Year in 2002.

Ms. Loppatto suggested reenacting the Loop Canal development event. The Committee members showed enthusiasm towards this idea.

Ms. Olmstead said that there could be a simple ceremony that tells the story of how it was built, including characters dressed up as the people from that time: John Addy and his wife, Jenny. She asked Ms. Young to talk with Bill Addy about getting information on the experience.

Ms. Olmstead also suggested thinking of food ideas that people would have shared at the time.

Ms. Farrar made a suggestion to make a recommendation to the Town Council to have a dock built at the Loop Canal.

Projects for This Year

- Ms. Olmstead will ask permission to republish the BBLA historical pamphlet.
- Ms. Loppatto suggested starting a Loop Canal Committee. Ms. Olmstead agreed with this idea and it will be discussed later.
- Continue collecting news articles to put in an album for display in the museum.
- Note cards of houses on town map mural for sale in museum.
- Labels for historical pictures displayed in the Town Hall.

Other Business

Ms. Olmstead said that the Town Manager, Mr. Gravier, gave the CHAC Committee permission to have a room upstairs at the Nature Center to use for storage.

Motion to Adjourn

Ms. Young made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Ms. Loppatto seconded this motion and it was unanimously approved.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:55 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Lindsey Shallcross
Administrative Secretary

